



Preliminary Progress Report: Missouri Domestic Violence Task Force

Summary of Task Force Mission

Governor Bob Holden appointed the Missouri Domestic Violence Task Force in August 2001 to study solutions for domestic violence in Missouri. The Task Force was established by the Governor to focus on four specific tasks: 1) to conduct an inventory of state funding and resources dedicated to domestic violence; 2) to enhance public and private resources; 3) to investigate opportunities to expand domestic violence prevention and intervention services; and 4) to work toward the development of a coordinated and integrated strategic action plan that will advance the needs, policies, and priorities set by the Task Force. The mission of the Task Force was delineated in Governor Holden's Executive Order 01-13 (attached).

Summary of Preliminary Report of the Task Force

The Task Force met four times during August through November 2001 to assess Missouri's responses to domestic violence and to identify initial recommendations for consideration by Governor Holden. These recommendations are specific to legislative action to be achieved during the Second Regular Session of the 91st Missouri General Assembly. The legislative recommendations do not represent the full scope of the Task Force's mission but are presented as preliminary findings. The Task Force will continue its work through 2002 to identify current and needed resources, policies, and model prevention and intervention practices to develop a comprehensive strategic plan to reduce the impact and occurrence of domestic violence in Missouri through both government and private efforts.

Therefore, the Task Force recommends consideration of the following identified issues to address domestic violence through legislative action during the 2002 session of the Missouri General Assembly:

- Amend the relocation provisions in the dissolution and child custody statutes in Chapter 452 to provide protections for parents and children who are victims of domestic violence and seek to relocate after a divorce. The Missouri House Interim Committee on Relocation is currently holding hearings and investigating Missouri's relocation statute.
- Expand the statutory definition of domestic violence shelters in Chapter 455,

RSMo, to include non-residential, non-profit domestic violence programs.

- Extend the statute of limitations for the prosecution of rape. Department of Justice crime data analyses continue to report that the largest percentage of female rape victims were attacked by intimates or acquaintances, but this population may not represent the largest percentage of prosecuted cases. Recent rulings by Missouri's Eastern and Western District Courts of Appeals conflict with regard to the current statute of limitations, with one ruling limiting the prosecution to three years after the crime's commission. Legislation introduced in 2001 to remove the statute of limitations for the prosecution of forcible rape and forcible sodomy was not opposed but failed to obtain final passage by the General Assembly.
- Remove the statutory "sunset clause" that ended the ability of a county governing body to establish a \$2 civil case filing fee designated to provide operating revenues for domestic violence shelters. This amendment to 455.205 RSMo, was approved by both the Missouri House and Senate in 2000 but failed to achieve final passage. Further amendment of this section of law should expand the eligibility for these funds to non-residential, non-profit domestic violence programs.
- Ask the General Assembly to clarify the enabling legislation that attempted to create the grant program for domestic violence services in unserved communities in 2001. An error in this section of law, 455.300 RSMo, forced Governor Holden to veto the \$1 million appropriation for grants that would have gone to the Department of Social Services to provide domestic violence services for Missouri communities without services. These services would include outreach, advocacy, prevention and community education services.

Methodology and Mission of the Task Force

The Missouri Domestic Violence Task Force identified four main missions for its work as set forth in its charge from Governor Bob Holden in Executive Order 01-13. These areas of focus and mission are being used as the methodology for achieving consensus by the Task Force in its ongoing work of investigation and development of recommendations in a domestic violence strategic plan for Missouri.

Mission 1

Conduct an inventory of state funding and resources currently dedicated to addressing domestic violence.

Findings

State and Federal Grant Funds for Domestic Violence Programs and Services

The Task Force has completed Missouri's first inventory of state and federal grant

funds for agencies and programs providing services to victims of domestic violence. Identified by the Departments, which administer these funds, the inventory includes:

Department of Public Safety: Approximately \$9 million in state and federal funds are awarded yearly to private and public programs addressing domestic violence.

- Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). These are federal funds for grants to support services for victims of crime. Missouri awarded a total of \$6.1 million in VOCA funds for fiscal year 2002. Approximately \$4 million of the total were awarded in grants to public and private agencies or organizations providing domestic violence services.
- State Services to Victims Fund (SSVF). These funds originate as crime victim compensation court fines assessed upon criminal convictions in Missouri courts. The funds are allocated to the SSVF grant program according to a formula in state law. The SSVF program received a total of \$3.3 million for fiscal year 2002 for grants to victim service providers. Approximately 70% of these funds was awarded for domestic violence services.
- STOP grants. These are federal funds authorized through the Violence Against Women Act for grants awarded by states according to a federal formula. The formula requires specific percentages of the grants to be awarded for services to women victimized by violence through non-profit organizations, law enforcement units and programs, prosecution programs, court programs and for discretionary uses such as training efforts. Missouri received \$2.1 million in federal fiscal year 2001 STOP grant funding awarded for use during calendar year 2002. This represents a reduction from \$2.7 million in federal STOP funds awarded in calendar year 2001. All funds must be used for programs that address violence against women, primarily domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.
- Domestic Violence Shelter Tax Credits. This state tax incentive program is statutorily authorized for a total of \$2 million each year. For every \$2 donated to a domestic violence shelter--within parameters set by statute--a \$1 tax credit is provided to the donor. Only donations of \$100 or more are eligible for this tax credit.

Department of Social Services: Approximately \$5.1 million in state and federal funds are awarded yearly to private and public programs addressing domestic violence through the Division of Family Services.

- Domestic Violence Shelter and Related Support Services Grants. These grants are state general revenue funds, of which \$3.8 million were appropriated for fiscal year 2002, an increase of \$1 million from the prior year. These funds support "core services" of domestic violence shelter, hotline, crisis intervention, legal advocacy, case management, support groups and professional therapy. The Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence receives \$190,000 in funding through this program to provide quality of service monitoring for the programs receiving grants and to provide domestic violence training and technical

assistance to programs throughout the state to achieve quality service standards and best practices.

- Domestic Violence Victim Assistance grants. These are federal funds authorized through the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act. Missouri received \$1.3 million in federal fiscal year 2001 for grants awarded in state fiscal year 2002 for domestic violence prevention and services.

Department of Health and Senior Services: Approximately \$980,000 for sexual assault prevention and services grants which can include services for victims of domestic violence-related sexual assault.

- Rape Medical Exams. Hospitals and physicians may be reimbursed for conducting rape medical exams through a state general revenue fund of \$85,000. This fund is a payor of last resort.
- Sexual Assault Prevention Education Grants. Federal fiscal year 2002 grant funds of \$650,000 provide for community-based sexual assault prevention education and training.
- Sexual Assault Victim Services. Federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) funding of \$139,134 is awarded in grants for programs and services to victims of sexual assault.
- Missouri Coalition Against Sexual Assault. Federal VAWA funding of \$100,000 is awarded to the Coalition for the provision of statewide sexual assault information, professional training and public awareness efforts.

Findings

State Department Programs and Related Resources

During the Task Force's initial resource inventory process, state departments provided written reports identifying existing programs, services, human resources and other initiatives for domestic violence services and issues. Not all departments were initially able to report in the same manner on internal resources. Subsequent inventory and identification efforts will be continued by the Task Force during 2002. The following, therefore, details the preliminary domestic violence inventory reports from state departments, not including previously identified fiscal resources.

Department of Corrections

The Department of Corrections, through its Victim Services Unit, provides notification, information, referrals and basic advocacy to victims of the crime of incarcerated offenders. It was estimated that 8% of the victims served by this office are domestic violence victims, although the majority of these offenders were not incarcerated for domestic violence crimes. The Department also operates the VINE program to provide automated victim

notification services, batterer intervention in some offices of Probation and Parole, and a Restorative Justice Program.

Department of Health and Senior Services

The Department of Health and Senior Services addresses domestic violence as a health issue and has taken steps to incorporate information about, screening for, and responses to domestic violence in existing programs and trainings.

In addition to grants described earlier in this report, the DHSS funds professional trainings on domestic violence among health care providers and domestic violence information in perinatal substance abuse classes. The department requires or encourages screening for domestic violence with all federal- and state-funded family planning services contractors, Medicaid prenatal case management, home visiting programs and Alternatives to Abortion program contractors.

Department of Public Safety

The Department of Public Safety administers the largest source of federal and state grant programs that support services and programs for domestic violence victims. In addition, the Missouri State Highway Patrol collects data on law enforcement responses to domestic violence, domestic violence arrests and homicides through both state and federal systems. The Patrol operates the Missouri Uniform Law Enforcement System, which contains information on Orders of Protection and offender records as well as administers the federal Uniform Crime Reporting system for statewide collection of crime data for federal reporting systems.

Department of Mental Health

The Department of Mental Health, through its divisions and programs, provides services to clients identified as experiencing domestic violence. The department uses standardized screening tools to identify domestic violence within its Alcohol and Drug Abuse programs and Division of Comprehensive Psychiatric Services. No funds within the department are specifically directed to domestic violence intervention services. Standards require that the Comprehensive Substance Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Programs address domestic violence as a component of treatment. There is some potential for increasing the types and availability of services relating to domestic violence that are offered through this department.

Department of Social Services

The Department of Social Services has specific policies and procedures regarding domestic violence through the Division of Family Services--Income Maintenance and Children's Services--and the Division of Child Support Enforcement. Staff in these divisions received training in

collaboration with the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence during 2000-2001 on domestic violence screening, identification and referrals for support services from within DSS and through community-based domestic violence programs. Training in the Division of Family Services continues.

This domestic violence training follows the welfare reform state plan for Missouri as submitted and approved by the federal Department of Health and Human Services. Missouri elected to implement the "Family Violence Option" for its welfare reform plan. This requires that recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and child support enforcement services be screened for domestic violence and allowed certain waivers from these programs' requirements if determined necessary to protect the safety of victims and their children.

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has developed a violence prevention curriculum for use at the discretion of any of Missouri's 524 school districts. DESE does not have a specific domestic violence curriculum. DESE does not have standards for assessment, identification or intervention in the area of domestic violence. Based on discussions regarding programs within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Task Force recognizes a need for the further development of domestic violence programs and standardized training on domestic violence intervention and prevention for school officials, teachers, and staff.

Department of Economic Development

The Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) administered by the department provides tax incentives to businesses, which donate to eligible non-profit organizations, including domestic violence programs.

Mission 2

Investigate opportunities to enhance public and private resources.

Findings

Legislative action by the Missouri General Assembly in 2002 can enhance resources for addressing domestic violence.

The initial findings of the Task Force with regard to enhancing public and private resources for domestic violence programs and services resulted in the preliminary report recommendations for legislative action during the 2002 session of the Missouri General Assembly (see above, *Summary of Preliminary Report of the Task Force*).

The Task Force will continue its efforts to determine effective means by which to enhance public and private resources for addressing domestic violence.

Mission 3

Investigate opportunities to expand domestic violence prevention and intervention services, including early identification, intervention and prevention programs.

Findings

Further investigation by the Task Force is necessary to result in conclusive recommendations for expanding domestic violence prevention and intervention programs in Missouri.

Having completed its initial inventory of resources to prevent and intervene in domestic violence, the Task Force will continue its investigation of existing model prevention and intervention programs to increase the availability and effectiveness of these services through both state departments and community-based organizations providing domestic violence services.

Mission 4

Work toward the development of a coordinated and integrated strategic action plan that will advance the needs, policies and priorities set by the Task Force.

Findings

The Task Force will continue to work in 2002 to develop a coordinated strategic action plan to address domestic violence in Missouri.

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Executive Order 01-13

WHEREAS, thousands of women and children in Missouri are victims of domestic violence offenses which violate their basic human rights to live with respect, dignity, freedom from fear and violence; and

WHEREAS, domestic violence is a crime that effects all aspects of a community with devastating consequences for the primary victims, women and children; and

WHEREAS, in 1999 more than 4,500 women and 5,100 children obtained emergency safe shelter but more than 5,000 Missouri battered women and their children were turned away from domestic violence shelters that were full; and

WHEREAS, state government has an obligation to assist its citizens to live safely in all communities; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to conduct an inventory of state funding and resources currently dedicated to addressing domestic violence and to investigate opportunities to enhance public and private resources for expanded community and statewide domestic violence prevention and intervention services; and

WHEREAS, a Missouri strategic action plan is necessary for developing a coordinated and integrated approach to domestic violence that will advance pragmatic, qualified and quantifiable funding and policy recommendations based on needs and priorities;

NOW, THEREFORE, I BOB HOLDEN, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Missouri hereby create and establish the Missouri Domestic Violence Task Force (hereinafter referred to as the Task Force) to study solutions for domestic violence in Missouri.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is assigned for administrative purposes to the Office of the Governor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall consist of eleven (11) individuals appointed by the Governor, who shall serve without compensation, except that the Task Force members may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties for the Task Force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force may invite individuals representing local and federal agencies or private organizations and the general public to serve as ex officio members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall submit a report of its activities to the Governor, the Pro-Tem of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 1, 2001. A subsequent report shall be submitted by August 1, 2002.

Task Force members shall serve until September 1, 2002.

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